

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

Focus ON READING

Vocabulary

READING
COMPREHENSION

The Watsons Go to
Birmingham—1963

Christopher Paul Curtis

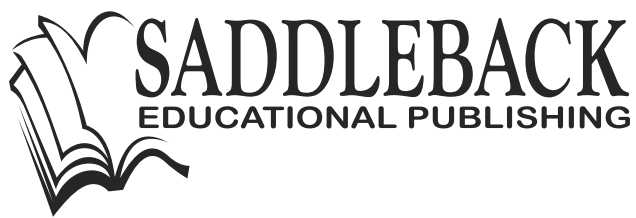
ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Reproducible Activities

Focus **ON READING**

*The Watsons
Go To
Birmingham-1963*

KYLA BROWN



Three Watson
Irvine, CA 92618-2767
Web site: www.sdlback.com

Copyright © 2006 by Saddleback Educational Publishing. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher, with the exception below.

Pages labeled with the statement Saddleback Educational Publishing © 2006 are intended for reproduction. Saddleback Educational Publishing grants to individual purchasers of this book the right to make sufficient copies of reproducible pages for use by all students of a single teacher. This permission is limited to a single teacher and does not apply to entire schools or school systems.

ISBN-1-59905-127-3
Printed in the United States of America
10 09 08 07 06 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

Introduction/Classroom Management *iva*

Focus on the Book *vi*

Focus Your Knowledge 1

I. CHAPTERS 1–3

Focus Your Reading 2–3

Build Your Vocabulary 4

Check Your Understanding:
Multiple Choice 5

Check Your Understanding:
Short Answer 6

Deepen Your Understanding 7

II. CHAPTERS 4–6

Focus Your Reading 8–9

Build Your Vocabulary 10

Check Your Understanding:
Multiple Choice 11

Check Your Understanding:
Short Answer 12

Deepen Your Understanding 13

III. CHAPTERS 7–8

Focus Your Reading 14–15

Build Your Vocabulary 16

Check Your Understanding:
Multiple Choice 17

Check Your Understanding:
Short Answer 18

Deepen Your Understanding 19

IV. CHAPTERS 9–10

Focus Your Reading 20–21

Build Your Vocabulary 22

Check Your Understanding:
Multiple Choice 23

Check Your Understanding:
Short Answer 24

Deepen Your Understanding 25

V. CHAPTERS 11–13

Focus Your Reading 26–27

Build Your Vocabulary 28

Check Your Understanding:
Multiple Choice 29

Check Your Understanding:
Short Answer 30

Deepen Your Understanding 31

VI. CHAPTERS 14–15

Focus Your Reading 32–33

Build Your Vocabulary 34

Check Your Understanding:
Multiple Choice 35

Check Your Understanding:
Short Answer 36

Deepen Your Understanding 37

End-of-Book Test 38

Answer Key 40

Introduction/Classroom Management

WELCOME TO *FOCUS ON READING*

Focus on Reading literature study guides are designed to help all students comprehend and analyze their reading. Many teachers have grappled with the question of how to make quality literature accessible to all students. Students who are already avid readers of quality literature are motivated to read and are familiar with prereading and reading strategies. However, struggling readers frequently lack basic reading skills and are not equipped with the prior knowledge and reading strategies to thoroughly engage in the classroom literature experience.

Focus on Reading is designed to make teachers' and students' lives easier! How? By providing materials that allow all students to take part in reading quality literature. Each *Focus on Reading* study guide contains activities that focus on vocabulary and comprehension skills that students need to get the most from their reading. In addition, each section within the guide contains a before-reading **Focus Your Reading** page containing tools to ensure success: **Vocabulary Words to Know**, **Things to Know**, and **Questions to Think About**. These study aids will help students who may not have the prior knowledge they need to truly comprehend the reading.

USING *FOCUS ON READING*

Focus on Reading is designed to make it easy for you to meet the individual needs of students who require additional reading skills support. Each *Focus on Reading* study guide contains teacher and student support materials, reproducible student activity sheets, an end-of-book test, and an answer key.

- **Focus on the Book**, a convenient reference page for the teacher, provides a brief overview of the entire book including a synopsis, information about the setting, author data, and historical background.
- **Focus Your Knowledge**, a reference page for students, is a whole-book, prereading activity designed to activate prior knowledge and immerse students in the topic.

The study guide divides the novel into 6 manageable sections to make it easy to plan classroom time. Five activities are devoted to each section of the novel.

Before Reading

- **Focus Your Reading** consists of 3 prereading sections:

Vocabulary Words to Know lists and defines 10 vocabulary words students will encounter in their reading. Students will not have to interrupt their reading to look up, ask for, or spend a lot of time figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words. These words are later studied in-depth within the lesson.

Things to Know identifies terms or concepts that are integral to the reading but that may not be familiar to today's students. This section is intended to "level the playing field" for those students who may not have much prior knowledge about the time period, culture, or theme of the book. It also gets students involved with the book, increasing interest before they begin reading.

Questions to Think About helps students focus on the main ideas and important details they should be looking for as they read. This activity helps give students a *purpose* for reading. The goal of these guiding questions is to build knowledge, confidence, and comfort with the topics in the reading.

During Reading

- **Build Your Vocabulary** presents the 10 unit focus words in the exact context of the book. Students are then asked to write their own definitions and sentences for the words.
- **Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice** offers 10 multiple-choice, literal comprehension questions for each section.
- **Check Your Understanding: Short Answer** contains 10 short-answer questions based on the reading.

After Reading

- **Deepen Your Understanding** is a writing activity that extends appreciation and analysis of the book. This activity focuses on critical-thinking skills and literary analysis.
- **End-of-Book Test** contains 20 multiple-choice items covering the book. These items ask questions that require students to synthesize the information in the book and make inferences in their answers.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Focus on Reading is very flexible. It can be used by the whole class, by small groups, or by individuals. Each study guide divides the novel into 6 manageable units of study.

This literature comprehension program is simple to use. Just photocopy the lessons and distribute them at the appropriate time as students read the novel.

You may want to reproduce and discuss the **Focus Your Knowledge** page before distributing the paperbacks. This page develops and activates prior knowledge to ensure that students have a grounding in the book before beginning reading. After reading this whole-book prereading page, students are ready to dive into the book.

The **Focus Your Reading** prereading activities are the keystone of this program. They prepare students for what they are going to read, providing focus for the complex task of reading. These pages should be distributed before students actually begin reading the corresponding section of the novel. There are no questions to be answered on these pages; these are for reference and support during reading. Students may choose to take notes on these pages as they read. This will also give students a study tool for review before the **End-of-Book Test**.

The **Focus Your Reading** pages also provide an excellent bridge to home. Parents, mentors, tutors, or

other involved adults can review vocabulary words with students, offer their own insights about the historical and cultural background outlined, and become familiar with the ideas students will be reading about. This can help families talk to students in a meaningful way about their reading, and it gives the adults something concrete to ask about to be sure that students are reading and understanding.

The **Build Your Vocabulary** and **Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice** and **Short Answer** activities should be distributed when students begin reading the corresponding section of the novel. These literature guide pages are intended to help students comprehend and retain what they read; they should be available for students to refer to at any time during the reading.

Deepen Your Understanding is an optional extension activity that goes beyond literal questions about the book, asking students for their own ideas and opinions—and the reasons behind them. These postreading activities generally focus on literary analysis.

As reflected in its title, the **End-of-Book Test** is a postreading comprehension test to be completed after the entire novel has been read.

For your convenience, a clear **Answer Key** simplifies the scoring process.

Focus on the Book

Synopsis

Kenny Watson is a ten-year-old living with his family in Flint, Michigan. Growing up as an African American in the 1960s, he sees poverty and discrimination. He has a sense of humor and an insightful and cheerful view of life, even when he is picked on for being smart and having a lazy eye. He admires but never really understands his older brother, Byron, who is always getting into trouble.

When Byron dyes and straightens his hair, the family—Momma, Dad, Byron, Kenny, and Joetta—take a trip to Birmingham, Alabama, to show the rebellious Byron the difficulties life presents to African Americans. The unrest and violence they find there teach all of them about the hardships of life and the importance of family.

About the Author

Christopher Paul Curtis was born in Flint, Michigan, in 1953—like Kenny Watson. After finishing high school, he went to work at the Fisher Body Plant in the automobile assembly line. Because he hated factory work, he began keeping a journal to take his mind off the job. He earned his degree from the University of Michigan.

While driving to Florida to visit his sister-in-law, he was inspired to write a story called “The Watsons Go to Florida.” He was unhappy with the direction the story was taking until his son brought home the poem “Ballad of Birmingham” by Dudley Randall, which described the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church. The poem prompted Mr. Curtis to finish *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*.

Historical Background

The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963 takes place during the Civil Rights movement. During this time period, the movement was gaining importance in politics. The Supreme Court ruling in the *Brown v. the Board of Education* case allowed black and white children to attend the same school. The Court

declared the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling of the 1800s unconstitutional, decreeing that it is not possible for blacks to be given “separate but equal” treatment. These important rulings stated that black Americans were entitled to the same privileges and rights as all other Americans.

Many African Americans moved to Northern states in the economic boom following World War II, searching for jobs, equality, and better living conditions. Many workers turned to the auto industry, but the factories did not have enough jobs for all the new people. Over 40% of African Americans in Detroit, Michigan, were unemployed, and poverty in the North was as common as in the South.

African Americans who remained in the South faced segregation laws limiting their actions, making it nearly impossible to vote, forcing them into substandard living conditions, and even dictating from which water fountains they could drink.

Birmingham, Alabama, was a central location for leaders of the Civil Rights movement to meet; many meetings took place in the 16th Street Baptist Church—the same church that many African Americans attended for religious services and Sunday school. On September 15, 1963, the church was destroyed by a bomb during a Sunday school session. Four young girls—Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley—were killed in the explosion. Twenty others were injured.

The law was slow to apprehend the people, all white men, who placed the bomb. In 1977, fourteen years later, Robert Edward Chamblis was convicted of murder and later died in prison. Two suspects were not indicted until May 17, 2000. One of them, Thomas Blanton, was found guilty of murder. Bobby Frank Cherry’s trial was delayed until he was found mentally able to stand trial. In May 2002, he was found guilty of conspiracy in the bombing. Herman Cash died in 1994 without standing trial.

Focus Your Knowledge

During the 1960s, black Americans were fighting for equal rights and desegregation—the right to share the same privileges and facilities as white Americans. This struggle is called the Civil Rights movement.

- Look at a map of the eastern United States. Find Flint, Michigan, and Birmingham, Alabama. What do you know about these two places? How might these two places be different? How might they be the same? How does their location on the map affect these conditions?
- What do you know about the Civil Rights movement? How will this knowledge help you to understand the life of a young black boy in the United States in the 1960s?
- How does the Civil Rights movement affect life today? Why might knowing about civil rights be important?
- What is terrorism? How did it affect life in the 1960s? How does it affect life today? What can Americans do to stop terrorism?



Focus Your Reading

Vocabulary Words to Know

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

juvenile delinquent—a young person who breaks rules set by parents and authorities

vital—necessary; important; required

numerous—very many; a great number of

miraculous—wonderful; incredible; like a miracle

intimidate—to scare, threaten, or bully

emulate—to copy the actions or behavior of someone

cockeyed—crossed-eyed; having a squinty eye

thug—a mean person; a bully

punctual—on time; prompt

radioactive—giving off radiation, usually thought of in connection with certain kinds of explosions or reactions

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

Narcissus is a young man in Greek mythology who falls in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. He becomes so obsessed with the reflection that he forgets to eat and drink. He eventually dies and is turned into a flower.

Langston Hughes (1902–1967) was a novelist and poet who wrote about racial relationships and difficulties. He was one of the first black writers to make a living by writing.

A **twenty-two** (usually written **.22**) is a type of gun that uses bullets with a 22-millimeter diameter.

The **Nazis** were a group of people who came to political power in 1933 in Germany. Their leader was Adolf Hitler, a man who wanted to rule the world. In 1939, the Nazis became involved in World War II, with Germany, Italy, and Japan fighting Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. How is Rufus Kenny’s “personal saver”?

2. In what ways are Kenny and Byron different? In what ways are they similar?

3. What does Rufus mean when he says Kenny is “different”?

4. How is Kenny and Rufus’s friendship different from Byron and Buphead’s?

5. What do you think Momma says to Rufus to help him forgive Kenny?

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “Byron had just turned thirteen so he was officially a teenage **juvenile delinquent** and didn’t think it was ‘cool’ to touch anybody or let anyone touch him, even if it meant he froze to death.”
juvenile delinquent: _____
2. “I’ve often told you that as Negroes the world is many times a hostile place for us. . . . I’ve pointed out time and time again how **vital** it is that one be able to read well.”
vital: _____
3. “I’ve stressed on **numerous** occasions the importance of being familiar and comfortable with literature.”
numerous: _____
4. “I want you to carefully note how advanced this second-grade student is. . . . I want you to be aware that some of our kids read at **miraculous** levels.”
miraculous: _____
5. “If, instead of trying to **intimidate** your young brother, you would **emulate** him and use that mind of yours, perhaps you’d find things much easier.”
intimidate: _____
emulate: _____
6. “‘See? You ain’t **cockeyed** no more, your eyes is straight as a arrow now!’”
cockeyed: _____
7. “We’d be standing on the corner waiting for the bus, Byron, Buphead and all the other old **thugs** in one bunch, Larry Dunn, Banky and all the other young thugs in another bunch, the regular kids like Joetta in a third bunch and me off to the side by myself.”
thugs: _____
8. “‘This is the only way you little punks is gonna learn to be **punctual**. I hope that fool has a pleasant walk to school.’ Then no matter how hard the late kid banged on the side of the bus the driver would just take off, laughing out the window.”
punctual: _____
9. “. . . instead of digging each one of the couple hundred dead dinosaurs a grave we dug one giant hole and buried all the **radioactive** ones in it, then we put a big rock on top so no radioactivity could leak out.”
radioactive: _____

I. CHAPTERS 1–3

DURING READING

Check Your Understanding

Multiple Choice

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. Why does Momma always cover her mouth when she smiles?
 - a. to hide the gaps in her teeth
 - b. so the kids won't see her laughing
 - c. to keep from laughing out loud
2. What is the Brown Bomber?
 - a. one of Kenny's dinosaurs
 - b. a nickname for Byron
 - c. the Watsons' car
3. How can Kenny tell when Momma's worried?
 - a. She repeats herself.
 - b. She talks Southern-style.
 - c. She wrings her hands.
4. What two things does Kenny think are wrong with him?
 - a. his accent and his eyes
 - b. his clothes and his looks
 - c. his intelligence and his eyes
5. How does Byron tell Kenny to hide his lazy eye?
 - a. look at people sideways
 - b. put a hand over the lazy eye
 - c. squint his eyes
6. Why do the kids call Kenny "Poindexter"?
 - a. because of the way he dresses
 - b. because they admire him
 - c. because he's smart
7. Where is Rufus from?
 - a. Michigan
 - b. Alabama
 - c. Arkansas
8. What is Kenny's favorite game?
 - a. playing How to Survive a Blizzard
 - b. playing Nazis and Americans with toy dinosaurs
 - c. playing on the swings
9. What two things does Kenny say are wrong with Rufus?
 - a. his accent and his clothes
 - b. his eyes and his intelligence
 - c. his teeth and his walk
10. Why does Momma give Kenny extra sandwiches and apples?
 - a. He asks for them.
 - b. She thinks he needs to eat more.
 - c. He shares them with Rufus and Cody.

Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. Why does Dad say the kids could have been “the Hambonettes”?
2. Why are the Watsons going to Aunt Cydney’s house?
3. What happens to Byron while he and Kenny are scraping the windows of the Brown Bomber?
4. Why doesn’t Kenny believe Byron is in trouble when he hears By mumbling for help? What convinces him?
5. Why does Kenny call Byron the Lipless Wonder?
6. Who is the king of Clark? How does Kenny compare him to Byron?
7. Why is Kenny nervous about Byron going to junior high school?
8. In what ways does Kenny think Rufus will be his personal saver?
9. How does Kenny lose his dinosaurs?
10. Why does Rufus stop playing with Kenny? Why does Rufus come back?

Deepen Your Understanding

Hyperbole (hy-PER-buh-lee) is the use of exaggeration, or making things seem more extreme than they really are. When Kenny says, “It was about a zillion degrees below zero,” he is using hyperbole.

Choose a passage in which Kenny uses exaggeration. Below, try rewriting that passage without using hyperbole. Then write a paragraph explaining which version of the passage you prefer, and why.

Focus Your Reading

Vocabulary Words to Know

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

imitation—a copy of something

pomade—a nice-smelling oil used to style hair

mature—adult; full-grown

frostbite—an injury caused by extreme cold

skimpy—meager; not full or sizable; not enough

carp—a type of large fish

snatched—grabbed quickly

hypnotized—spellbound; took control of someone's mind

traitor—a person who betrays his or her beliefs, country, friends, or something else very important

peon—a peasant; a low worker

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

Montgomery Ward's was a department store.

Maytag is a brand of washing machine and other large appliances.

The Miracle Worker is the title of a book and a movie about Helen Keller, a woman who was deaf, blind, and could not speak. Her teacher, Annie Sullivan, taught her to communicate using sign language against the palm of her hand. It must have seemed like Ms. Sullivan had performed a miracle when she was able to make Helen understand and understandable.

Sugar Ray Robinson was a popular African-American boxer.

Smokey the Bear is a bear character used in advertisements promoting fire safety and the prevention of forest fires.

The Untouchables was a popular television show about a group of detectives led by Eliot Ness. These law officers were often involved in gunfights, car chases, and other action scenes.

Welfare is a government program set up to help families who do not have enough money to buy food and other necessities.

The Magnificent Seven is a movie about seven cowboys who help people in need.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. Why do you think Byron makes Larry Dunn be part of *The Great Carp Escape*?
2. Why does Momma think she needs to burn Byron?
3. Why do you think Byron doesn't run away when Momma goes to get the matches?
4. How do Kenny's and Byron's reactions to being on welfare differ? Why do you think this is?
5. What does Byron's reaction to the mourning dove show about him?

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “We wore so many clothes that when Byron wasn’t around, the other kids said stuff like ‘Here come some of them Weird Watsons doing their Mummy **imitations**.’”
imitations: _____
2. “. . . Joey was a little oven and inside all these clothes she’d baked up her own special perfume, with the smell of shampoo and soap and the **pomade** Momma put in her hair.”
pomade: _____
3. “‘Yeah, but what you don’t know is that Momma’s only doing what’s right, there’s something she don’t want you two to know yet, but I know you some real **mature** kids so I’m a tell you anyway.’”
mature: _____
4. “‘This is the last [pair of gloves], Kenny, after this you won’t have anything for the rest of the year so be very careful. . . . Do you know what **frostbite** will do to you?’”
frostbite: _____
5. “You’d have to be pretty tough to stand around giving people Maytags on a day as cold as this with those **skimpy** clothes on!”
skimpy: _____
6. “*The Great Carp Escape* was about a **carp** that was trying to get out of a net in the Flint River. The stupid fish would run into the net, get knocked down, then get back up and run into the net all over again.”
carp: _____
7. “Momma **snatched** Byron’s neck and, stopping just to pick up the matches that Byron had dropped, she dragged him all the way down the stairs!”
snatched: _____
8. “Joey kept pulling at his hand but it looked like Byron was **hypnotized** and he wouldn’t move.”
hypnotized: _____
9. “Joey climbed off Momma’s lap and Byron’s eyes got bigger and bigger but his **traitor** hands kept him pinned to the couch.”
traitor: _____
10. “‘You really gonna make me go embarrass myself by signing a welfare list for some groceries like a blanged **peon**?’”
peon: _____

II. CHAPTERS 4–6

DURING READING

*Check Your Understanding**Multiple Choice*

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. What does Kenny like about Momma's fear of the cold?
 - a. She dresses the kids warmly.
 - b. She buys the kids leather gloves.
 - c. He gets to spend time with Joey while taking her coats off.
2. Why does Kenny tell Momma he lost his first pair of gloves?
 - a. He wants to share his gloves with Rufus.
 - b. Larry Dunn stole his gloves.
 - c. He wants to wear them kindergarten-style.
3. How does Larry disguise Kenny's gloves?
 - a. He colors them with shoe polish.
 - b. He wears them inside out.
 - c. He gets them dirty.
4. What makes Kenny think Larry's tough?
 - a. He beats up all the other kids.
 - b. He doesn't do what Byron tells him.
 - c. He wears just a T-shirt and a windbreaker in the winter.
5. What stops Momma from burning Byron?
 - a. Joey keeps blowing out the matches.
 - b. Byron runs away.
 - c. Momma doesn't want to hurt Byron.
6. What makes Byron think the Watsons are on welfare?
 - a. Their cheese comes in large packages.
 - b. Momma tells him to sign for their groceries.
 - c. Momma only gives him a short shopping list.
7. Why does Byron make Kenny sign for the groceries?
 - a. He doesn't want people to know he's on welfare.
 - b. He's busy reading the comics.
 - c. He doesn't want to talk to Mr. Mitchell.
8. Why does Byron share his Swedish Cremes with Kenny?
 - a. He dropped the cookies in the dirt.
 - b. The bag is empty.
 - c. He has more than he can eat.
9. How does Byron get the Swedish Cremes?
 - a. Momma sends him to buy them.
 - b. He puts them on the Watsons' grocery bill.
 - c. Mr. Mitchell gives them to him.
10. How does Byron kill the mourning dove?
 - a. He hits it with a rock.
 - b. He hits it with a green apple.
 - c. He hits it with a cookie.

Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. What does Kenny say is the worst part of wearing his winter clothes?
2. What does By tell Joey and Kenny the big doors on garbage trucks are used for?
3. How does Rufus recognize Kenny's gloves?
4. What is *The Great Carp Escape*?
5. Why does Momma get upset when Byron plays with fire?
6. Why does Momma need to get another set of matches?
7. What does Momma say that convinces Joey that Momma has to burn Byron?
8. Why can't Kenny tell Momma that By got "free food"?
9. What happens to the mourning dove By kills?
10. Why is Kenny confused by Byron's treatment of the bird?

Deepen Your Understanding

A motive is something that causes a person to behave in a certain way. Think about Byron's behavior in this section. How do his actions in "Froze-Up Southern Folks" (Chapter 4) and "Swedish Cremes and Welfare Cheese" (Chapter 6) compare? Based on what you have read about Byron so far, what might some of the motives for his actions be? What would you do in his place? Explain your ideas in a few paragraphs.

Focus Your Reading

Vocabulary Words to Know

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

linoleum—a type of flooring, often shiny and slick, that was once commonly used in kitchens

pinnacle—the highest point

seniority—status earned by age or length of time in a job

vibration—a feeling of shaking, trembling, or quivering

dispersal—the act of scattering something or the state of being scattered

phonic—having to do with sound

symphonic—having to do with a large orchestra (a symphony) or sounding like one

haphazardly—carelessly

enhance—to make better

maestro—someone who is very skilled at writing, teaching, or conducting music; sometimes referring to one who plays music

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

Bozo was a popular television clown known for his bright red, stiff hair that stuck out over each ear.

Death row is the nickname for the part of a jail where prisoners who are to be put to death are kept. The governor of the state can call to give a prisoner a stay of execution, which means that the punishment is put off.

“**Straighten Up and Fly Right**” is a song made popular by black singer Nat King Cole.

“**His Royal Highness, Yul Watson**” refers to the movie *The King and I*, in which Yul Brynner plays the King of Siam. Brynner shaved his head for the role and made that style popular.

45 is another name for a vinyl record; it refers to the speed at which the record spins on the turntable. Records were popular before the introduction of CDs. A record player uses a needle to read the grooves on a record, making them sensitive to scratches or bumps. Because some records are about the size of a dinner plate, they are sometimes called “platters.” Because a record player spins the record, people would sometimes say “Spin it” to tell someone to play a record.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. Why are Momma and Dad so upset by Byron's behavior?
2. Are Momma and Dad's reactions to Byron's latest adventure what you expect? Why or why not?
3. What makes Momma and Dad think Birmingham will be a good place for Byron?
4. Why does Kenny tease Byron so much about his hair?
5. Why do you think Joey protects Byron so fiercely?

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “Byron started walking toward Momma in slow motion, sliding his feet on the **linoleum**.”
linoleum: _____
2. “The height of technology. . . . The ultimate in American knowledge. . . . It’s the **pinnacle** of Western civilization.”
pinnacle: _____
3. “Dad started shaving. ‘Well, just so there’s no problems, I’ve got **seniority** on you, so I get the bathroom first, deal?’”
seniority: _____
4. “As I’m certain you are aware, the problem in the past with this new technology in automotive sound has been road **vibrations** interfering with an accurate **dispersal** of the **phonic** interpretations. . . . In other words, I’m sure you know that in the good old days every time you drove over a bump with one of these things the needle would jump and scratch the record.”
vibrations: _____
dispersal: _____
phonic: _____
5. “Before I dazzle you with the **symphonic** sound of this unit, let me point out some of its less-appreciated features.”
symphonic: _____
6. “And I can tell by that intelligent look on your face, Mrs. Watson, that you have grasped that that speaker is not placed in the rear deck **haphazardly**, no, ma’am. Some people think we just have a hole hacked in back there by any old mechanic, but nothing could be further from the truth.”
haphazardly: _____
7. “That opening is scientifically and mathematically positioned by a factory-trained technician to **enhance** the TT AB-700’s true high-fidelity sound!”
enhance: _____
8. “We at Flint’s only soul station, WAMM, dedicate this song to Daniel, from Wilona. Spin it, **maestro**!”
maestro: _____

III. CHAPTERS 7–8

DURING READING

Check Your Understanding

Multiple Choice

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. What does By do to his hair?
 - a. shaves it off
 - b. straightens it
 - c. grows it long
2. How does Kenny know when Dad's really mad?
 - a. Dad repeats everything.
 - b. Dad talks quietly.
 - c. Dad uses swear words.
3. What does the Brown Bomber have for a hood ornament?
 - a. a rocket ship
 - b. an airplane
 - c. a dog
4. What does Dad say is the "pinnacle of Western civilization"?
 - a. the hood ornament
 - b. the smelly pine tree
 - c. the Ultra-Glide
5. Why does Kenny like watching Dad shave?
 - a. He likes the way the soap smells.
 - b. Dad talks to him like a grown-up while he shaves.
 - c. He likes using Dad's Old Spice.
6. What is the Ultra-Glide?
 - a. a hood ornament
 - b. a smelly green pine tree
 - c. a record player
7. What is Kenny's song?
 - a. "Yakety-Yak"
 - b. "Under the Boardwalk"
 - c. "Straighten Up and Fly Right"
8. What does Kenny think Momma and Dad's big news is?
 - a. They're going on vacation.
 - b. They're going to visit Grandma Sands.
 - c. They're going to have a baby brother or sister.
9. What is Momma and Dad's big news?
 - a. They're going on vacation.
 - b. They're going to visit Grandma Sands.
 - c. They're going to have a baby brother or sister.
10. How does Kenny know Momma and Dad are serious about their decision?
 - a. They've gotten the Brown Bomber ready.
 - b. Byron has been in more trouble than normal.
 - c. He overheard them talking about it.

Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. What does Kenny do to tease Byron about his hair?
2. Why does Byron say Kenny's a Chihuahua?
3. What does Dad decide to do about Byron's hair?
4. Why does the Brown Bomber's hood ornament have only one wing?
5. What reason does Dad give for hiding his toothbrush?
6. What disappoints Dad about the Ultra-Glide?
7. In what way is Momma fair about stopping fun?
8. What are some of Byron's Latest Fantastic Adventures?
9. What does Momma say is good about Alabama?
10. What are the three reasons that Kenny thinks Momma and Dad would never send Byron to Alabama?

Deepen Your Understanding

Christopher Paul Curtis chose to tell this story from the first-person point of view. That means that a character in the story is telling it to us. In this book, Kenny is telling us about his own childhood and sharing his feelings. He can only tell us what he knows, feels, thinks, and sees; he can't tell what goes on inside anyone else.

Choose a passage you enjoyed. Then try writing it from the point of view of another character. How is the story different now?

IV. CHAPTERS 9–10

BEFORE READING

*Focus Your Reading**Vocabulary Words to Know*

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

temptation—something a person wants to do or have but (usually) shouldn't

determined—resolved; firmly decided
(a person who is bound and determined can't be turned away from what he or she wants to do)

accustomed—used to or familiar with a person or thing

eavesdropped—listened to a private conversation while hidden

bunking—spending the night

transferred—moved from one place to another

coop—a place to keep chickens ("to fly the coop" means to sneak out or escape)

offended—to feel hurt or angered by something someone does or says

sanitation—cleanliness; healthfulness

rubberized—made like rubber; made wobbly

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

The Lawrence Welk Show was a popular television show in which band leader Lawrence Welk showcased many musicians and talented people. It often featured big band music and dancing.

The **United Auto Workers** is a union, which is an organized group of people that tries to make sure workers in a particular job are treated fairly in pay and work conditions. Seniority—length of service—is often a very important factor for union jobs. People who have been on the job for the longest time are first in line for promotions and pay increases.

Appalachia is an area in the eastern United States. It includes parts of Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The Appalachians form a mountain range running through this area. Mountains are measured by height above sea level rather than height above ground, so a mountain that is six thousand feet above sea level is six thousand feet above the surface of the ocean, but it may seem higher if compared to the land around it.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. Why do you think Joetta doesn't like her present from Mrs. Davidson?
2. Why does Momma plan the trip so carefully?
3. What do the Watsons find so scary about the dark woods?
4. What makes Byron change his plan to make his family feel bad?
5. What do you think makes the ride down the mountain the best part of the trip for Kenny?

IV. CHAPTERS 9–10

DURING READING

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “Good, because, Kenny we’ve done all we can and it seems the **temptations** are just too much for By here in Flint.”
temptations: _____
2. “Momma and I are very worried because there’re so many things that can go wrong to a young person and Byron seems bound and **determined** to find every one of them.”
determined: _____
3. “And you won’t believe this, but if you listen to any kind of music long enough, first you get **accustomed** to it and then you learn to like it.”
accustomed: _____
4. “When Mrs. Davidson left, Momma went upstairs and into Joey’s room. I **eavesdropped**.”
eavesdropped: _____
5. “We thought since this was the last night you were going to be spending in Flint for a while that you might like to sleep in our room tonight. . . . you’re **bunking** with us tonight,’ Dad said.”
bunking: _____
6. “I guess the grapevine had gotten back to Momma and Dad that By was going to make a prison break tonight before he got **transferred** to Alabama.”
transferred: _____
7. “She knew if Momma and Dad got up in the morning and Byron had flown the **coop** that he’d really be a dead man when they finally recaptured him. . . .”
coop: _____
8. “Ooh, Kenneth, I asked her the same thing and she was highly **offended**.”
offended: _____
9. “Ain’t they got no **sanitation** laws down there? How you gonna have a hole for a toilet and not get folks sick?”
sanitation: _____
10. “Then my neck got **rubberized** again and my head nodded down.”
rubberized: _____

IV. CHAPTERS 9–10

DURING READING

Check Your Understanding

Multiple Choice

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. What does Kenny like about talking to Dad in the car?
 - a. having time alone with Dad
 - b. having Dad talk to him like a grown-up
 - c. getting to listen to his records
2. What does Mrs. Davidson give Joey?
 - a. an angel
 - b. a coloring book
 - c. a game
3. Where does Joey keep her present?
 - a. on her bookshelf
 - b. under her bed
 - c. in her sock drawer
4. Why does Joey say the angel doesn't look like her?
 - a. It has brown eyes.
 - b. It's white.
 - c. It has dimples.
5. Why does By sleep in Momma and Dad's room the night before the trip?
 - a. because they'll miss him while he's away
 - b. so that he'll stop teasing Kenny
 - c. so that he won't run away
6. What does Momma write down in the notebook?
 - a. all the travel plans
 - b. how far they've driven
 - c. all the things By needs to remember
7. What surprises Kenny about the rest stop in Ohio?
 - a. the number of trees
 - b. the people
 - c. the bathrooms
8. What does Kenny find in Joey's shoe?
 - a. a picture of a girl and a boy
 - b. a picture of a boy and a dog
 - c. a picture of an angel
9. What does Joey notice about the sky in Tennessee?
 - a. It has a lot of stars.
 - b. It's a different color.
 - c. There are a lot of birds.
10. What is By afraid of seeing at the rest stop in Tennessee?
 - a. snakes
 - b. stars
 - c. people

Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. What does Dad say he hopes Byron will learn in Alabama?
2. What scares Kenny about being a grown-up?
3. What does Dad tell the kids is the reason that they have to stop in specific places?
4. How does Byron plan to get back at his parents on the trip?
5. Why doesn't Kenny like the Kool-Aid Momma makes?
6. Why does Grandma Sands think outhouses are better than bathrooms?
7. Why does Dad want to drive straight from Michigan to Alabama without stopping?
8. What does Dad think wiggling his fingers in the mountain air feels like?
9. How does Kenny describe the Brown Bomber coming down the mountain?
10. What are some of the things that make driving down the mountain special to Kenny?

Deepen Your Understanding

An author chooses a title for a book or chapter not only to tell what the reading is about, but also to help readers understand the information better. Why do you think Christopher Paul Curtis chose the titles of the chapters in this section: “The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963” and “Tangled Up in God’s Beard”? Think about how the titles of these chapters affect your understanding of the story. Then write your answer below.

Focus Your Reading

Vocabulary Words to Know

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

vittles—a word meaning “food”

pathetic—causing pity or sadness

disposition—the mood a person is in most often

gnashing—grinding one’s teeth together, especially when angry or in pain

rabies—a disease animals and people get from the bite of an infected animal, often causing foaming at the mouth

puny—tiny and weak

hilarious—extremely funny

whirlpool—an area where water swirls in a funnel shape, pulling things to the bottom, as water in a drain

trespassing—going onto someone else’s land without permission

halo—a circlet of light often shown surrounding an angel’s head in pictures

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

“**Et tu, Brute?**” is a famous line in Latin spoken by Julius Caesar at his murder. He said this when he recognized his friend, Brutus, among his attackers. It is used now as a recognition of an act of betrayal.

Prairie dogs are desert-dwelling members of the squirrel family. They live in groups in wide-ranging burrows. They are known for popping out of their holes suddenly and then diving back in.

Captain Kangaroo was the kind-hearted star of a children’s television show popular in the 1960s.

Joe Louis was an African-American boxer. He was the world heavyweight champion from 1937 to 1949.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. Why is Momma so interested in Mr. Robert?
2. Why is Byron's behavior in Alabama so different from his behavior in Michigan?
3. What insight does Mr. Robert's story about Toddy give us into Kenny and Byron's story?
4. How does the real Grandma Sands compare to the one Kenny imagined?
5. How do you think the events at Collier's Landing will affect Kenny and Byron?

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “Momma kept teasing Dad. ‘And what ’bout some **vittles**, Clem, the sun been up fo’ hours and you ain’t even been out to check them traplines to see if we’s gonna have some coon pie. . . .”
vittles: _____
2. ““You talk about some **pathetic**, tortured-looking little faces.”
pathetic: _____
3. ““Yeah, I swear I’ve been looking in the rearview mirror and wondering where my babies were and where these three bad-**dispositioned**, sour-faced, middle-age midgets came from.”
disposition: _____
4. ““In spite of all the cryin’ and bawlin’ and moanin’ and wailin’ and **gnashin’** of teeth I kept pushing on.”
gnashing: _____
5. “I thought Grandma Sands would be bigger than Dad, I thought she’d be foaming at the mouth like she had **rabies**.”
rabies: _____
6. ““You was so **puny** when you was born you nearly worried us crazy.”
puny: _____
7. “Grandma Sands thought Momma was **hilarious** and cracked up every time Momma got upset or worried about something that she didn’t remember or didn’t like.”
hilarious: _____
8. ““If y’all are going to the water you stay away from Collier’s Landing. . . . Miss Thomas’s little boy Jimmy got caught up in some kinda **whirlpool** there and they didn’t find the poor soul’s body for three days.”
whirlpool: _____
9. “The one [sign] pointing to the left said “Public Swimming” and the other one, pointing to the right, looked like it had been on the post for a million years but if you got close to it you could read, “WARNING! NO **TRESPASSING**! NO SWIMMING! . . .”
trespassing: _____
10. “When the Wool Pooh pulled me closer I could see that it was a little angel, and wait a minute, it was Joetta, looking just like the angel Mrs. Davidson had given her! Joey had wings and a **halo**!”
halo: _____

Check Your Understanding

Multiple Choice

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. How does Dad say he kept everyone in the car asleep?
 - a. He played the same song.
 - b. He hummed like a vacuum.
 - c. He kept staring at the road.
2. What surprises Kenny about Birmingham?
 - a. the houses
 - b. the heat
 - c. the people
3. What does Kenny expect to happen when By meets Grandma Sands?
 - a. By will get in trouble for his behavior.
 - b. Grandma Sands will hug By and cry.
 - c. Grandma Sands and By will fight.
4. Who is Mr. Robert?
 - a. Grandma Sands's friend
 - b. Momma's friend
 - c. a neighbor
5. What does Kenny think of when Grandma Sands laughs?
 - a. clattering dishes
 - b. dogs barking
 - c. a witch cackling
6. Why does Momma keep wiping her hands while talking to Grandma Sands?
 - a. She's upset.
 - b. She's too hot.
 - c. She just finished cleaning the kitchen.
7. What does Kenny think is the worst thing about Alabama?
 - a. Grandma Sands's house
 - b. Byron's behavior
 - c. the heat
8. Why does Grandma Sands say to stay away from Collier's Landing?
 - a. Mr. Collier doesn't like trespassers.
 - b. There is a dangerous whirlpool there.
 - c. There is no one to watch the kids.
9. Why does Kenny go to Collier's Landing?
 - a. The public beach is too crowded.
 - b. He doesn't want to swim with Joey and By.
 - c. He wants to have his own adventure.
10. Why does Kenny go into the deep water?
 - a. to chase fish
 - b. to see the Wool Pooh
 - c. to catch a turtle

Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. How does Kenny describe Grandma Sands?
2. What happens when By meets Grandma Sands? What had Kenny expected?
3. Why does Byron sleep on the floor?
4. Why doesn't Toddy hunt anymore?
5. How does By explain a whirlpool to Joey and Kenny?
6. When does Kenny get scared in the water? Why?
7. How does Kenny describe the Wool Pooh?
8. What things does Kenny think he sees while he's underwater?
9. How does Kenny get out of the whirlpool?
10. How does Joey help save Kenny?

Deepen Your Understanding

Kenny says that getting in trouble happens in steps and that you get “a bunch of little warnings on the way.” When one event hints at another event that will happen later, it is called *foreshadowing*. What events foreshadow Kenny’s visit to Collier’s Landing? Can you think of other examples of foreshadowing in the book? Discuss this foreshadowing in a few paragraphs.

VI. CHAPTERS 14–15

BEFORE READING

*Focus Your Reading**Vocabulary Words to Know*

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

religious—dealing with religion or believing in a religion or god

magnolia—a type of bush that has a large, showy flower

sonic boom—a loud noise caused by an airplane moving faster than the speed of sound

frilly—decorated with fancy fabric edging

flickering—blinking on and off rapidly

fluttered—waved or flapped

veterinarian—a doctor who takes care of animals

patient—someone who is being cared for by a medical professional

reputation—the way a community describes a person

scrunched—made an expression so that the face is pulled in

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

Albert Einstein was a German-born American physicist who was renowned as a genius. He developed the theory of relativity. Someone may be called an Einstein if he or she is exceptionally smart.

During the **Civil Rights movement** of the 1960s, there were violent acts against people who were working toward equal rights. There were also victims who were not actively involved in protests and demonstrations. One bombing took place in the 16th Avenue Baptist Church on September 15, 1963. Four African-American girls were killed. Other people were wounded.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. Why do you think Kenny does not investigate the thunderous noise?

2. What makes Joey leave the church?

3. Why do you think Kenny takes the shoe from the church?

4. Why does Kenny slip behind the couch?

5. Why does Byron make Kenny come out and talk to him?

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “I wondered if there was something wrong with me, because it was real easy for me to lie, even to a pack of **religious** people on Sunday morning.”
religious: _____
2. “It was too hot even this early in the morning, so I walked over to the giant **magnolia** tree and rested in the coolness of its shade.”
magnolia: _____
3. “‘What was that bang?’ Dad kept looking toward the sky and said, ‘Hmm, must have been a **sonic boom**.’”
sonic boom: _____
4. “The little girl had on a blue dress and little blue **frilly** socks and black shiny, shiny shoes.”
frilly: _____
5. “One light from the ceiling was still hanging down by a wire, **flickering** and swinging back and forth, and every once in a while I could see stuff inside.”
flickering: _____
6. “Grown-ups were kneeling down by them and the adults’ hands **fluttered** down toward the little girls, then, before they touched anything, fluttered back up, over and over.”
fluttered: _____
7. “Since Momma and Dad had told us that animal doctors cost about a thousand dollars each time you went to them, our pets knew they wouldn’t be seeing any **veterinarians**. . . .”
veterinarians: _____
8. “. . . Momma would soon be telling us that Sooty or Fluffy or Scamp or Lady or whoever the **patient** was hadn’t done too well and would be spending the rest of time running around happily in cat or dog heaven.”
patient: _____
9. “Even though Byron had a **reputation** for not being a snitch I got the feeling he told on me.”
reputation: _____
10. “He walked over to the mirror and **scrunched** his face up so he could look at his chin again. . . .”
scrunched: _____

VI. CHAPTERS 14–15

DURING READING

Check Your Understanding

Multiple Choice

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. How does Kenny know it's Sunday?
 - a. He hears Joetta getting ready for Sunday school.
 - b. He gets to sleep late.
 - c. Grandma Sands gets up late.
2. What does Kenny find inside the shoe he takes?
 - a. a picture of an angel
 - b. a picture of a boy
 - c. a picture of a dog
3. What does Kenny compare his hands to?
 - a. leaves
 - b. sparrows
 - c. papers
4. Why does Joetta threaten to tell on Kenny?
 - a. He won't tell her where Momma is.
 - b. He's behaving very strangely.
 - c. He's not listening to her.
5. What does Joey say made her leave the church?
 - a. She was too hot.
 - b. She saw her friends.
 - c. She followed Kenny.
6. Where does Kenny hide from Momma and Dad?
 - a. behind the couch
 - b. in the yard
 - c. in the closet
7. How does Kenny know if a pet in the Pet Hospital is going to survive?
 - a. It wags its tail or hisses at him when he looks at it.
 - b. It's not behind the couch when he looks for it.
 - c. Dad tells him it's running around happily.
8. Why does Byron take Kenny into the bathroom?
 - a. to ask him what's wrong
 - b. to show him a hair
 - c. to make him change clothes
9. What does Kenny tell Byron is bothering him?
 - a. He's scared.
 - b. He's tired.
 - c. He's ashamed.
10. What does Kenny think Byron is wrong about?
 - a. that magic doesn't exist
 - b. that Kenny will be all right
 - c. thinking that Byron is beautiful

Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. What makes every bird and bug stop and wonder?
2. What tries to stop Kenny from picking up the shoe?
3. What does Kenny say the two little girls on the lawn would look like if Joey sat with them?
4. What does Kenny think is happening when he sees Joey at Grandma Sands's home?
5. What does Grandma Sands say happened at the church?
6. Why does Kenny hide behind the couch?
7. What makes Kenny think Byron told on him?
8. Why is Kenny ashamed of himself?
9. Kenny asks Byron why Joey was saved and not the other children. How does Byron respond?
10. What are some of the things Kenny sees magic powers in?

Deepen Your Understanding

Symbolism occurs when a writer uses one object or image to stand for another. Symbols often remind us of something, helping us to make connections in our minds. What do you think the Wool Pooh symbolizes? What other symbols appear in the book? What do they stand for? Explain your ideas in a few paragraphs.

End-of-Book Test

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. How does Byron's mouth get stuck to the mirror?
 - a. He has a mouthful of snow.
 - b. He kisses the mirror in the cold.
 - c. He leans too close to the mirror while scraping the windows.
2. How does Miss Henry embarrass Kenny?
 - a. She makes him sit near Cody.
 - b. She gives him special help.
 - c. She makes him read to Byron's class.
3. Who is Rufus Fry?
 - a. Kenny's friend
 - b. a bully at school
 - c. Byron's friend
4. Why does Kenny have to wear lots of winter clothes?
 - a. because he doesn't like to get cold
 - b. because Byron tells him to
 - c. because Momma is afraid of the cold
5. How does Momma plan to punish Byron for playing with matches?
 - a. by burning his fingers
 - b. by sending him to Birmingham
 - c. by shaving his head
6. What does Byron do with the mourning dove he has killed?
 - a. He buries it.
 - b. He leaves it in the dirt.
 - c. He tells Kenny to take care of it.
7. Why does Dad clean up and fix the Brown Bomber?
 - a. to make it look less than fifteen years old
 - b. to make Momma happy
 - c. to make it ready for a long trip
8. What does Dad tell Kenny becoming a grown-up is like?
 - a. being a parent
 - b. driving the Brown Bomber
 - c. going to Birmingham
9. What does Dad say is the real reason he bought the Ultra-Glide?
 - a. so that he won't listen to hillbilly music
 - b. so that they can listen to music using two speakers
 - c. so that Byron can have a special surprise before he leaves
10. Why does Momma plan the car trip to Birmingham so carefully?
 - a. because she loves writing the plans in her favorite notebook
 - b. because she's excited about the trip and wants to make sure they see all the sites
 - c. because blacks are restricted to only certain places, and she wants to be sure they stop in safe places

(continued)

End-of-Book Test (continued)

11. What does “God’s Beard” refer to?
 - a. the air in Appalachia
 - b. the darkness in Tennessee
 - c. the mountains
12. What reason does Byron give for not fighting with Grandma Sands?
 - a. She’s too mean.
 - b. She’s old.
 - c. She uses a cane.
13. Who is Toddy?
 - a. an old dog
 - b. a friend of Grandma Sands’s
 - c. a friend of Byron’s
14. What happens at Collier’s Landing?
 - a. The Watsons go swimming.
 - b. Joetta’s church is destroyed.
 - c. Kenny nearly drowns.
15. What does Joey wear to Sunday school in Birmingham?
 - a. a red dress
 - b. a white dress
 - c. a blue dress
16. What does Kenny take from the church?
 - a. the Wool Pooh
 - b. a rope
 - c. a shoe
17. What does Kenny say he should have told Joetta before she went to Sunday school?
 - a. that he loves her
 - b. that she saved his life
 - c. that she looks pretty
18. Why do the pets hide behind the Watsons’ couch?
 - a. to make a deal with the magic powers
 - b. to hide from the kids
 - c. to rest and get better
19. Who are Momma and Dad most worried about after the trip to Birmingham?
 - a. Byron
 - b. Kenny
 - c. Joetta
20. Who makes Kenny leave his hiding place?
 - a. Momma
 - b. Byron
 - c. Joetta

Answer Key

I. CHAPTERS 1–3

Build Your Vocabulary

Wording of definitions may vary. Students may remember the definitions given in the Vocabulary Words to Know section of Focus Your Reading, or they may refine the definition based on the context of the sentence and the reading overall. Students' new sentences will vary.

Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. a | 6. c |
| 2. c | 7. c |
| 3. b | 8. b |
| 4. c | 9. a |
| 5. a | 10. c |

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer

1. Momma could have married a man named Hambone Henderson.
2. There is no heat at their house.
3. Byron's lips get stuck to the car mirror when he kisses his reflection.
4. Kenny thinks Byron is going to spit snow and ice in his face. He is convinced when he sees that Byron is crying.
5. When Momma pulled Byron's mouth off the mirror, it looked like Byron's lips came off his face.
6. Larry Dunn is the king of Clark, but Byron is a god.
7. The kids don't pick on Kenny too much while Byron is around; when Byron leaves, Kenny will have no protection.
8. Kenny thinks the other kids will pick on Rufus instead of him.
9. LJ Jones steals them.
10. Kenny laughs when Larry Dunn teases Rufus, and Rufus stops playing with Kenny. Rufus comes back after talking to Momma because he knows Kenny is different.

Deepen Your Understanding

Answers will vary.

II. CHAPTERS 4–6

Build Your Vocabulary

Wording of definitions may vary. Students may remember the definitions given in the Vocabulary Words to Know section of Focus Your Reading, or they may refine the definition based on the context of the sentence and the reading overall. Students' new sentences will vary.

Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. b |
| 2. a | 7. a |
| 3. a | 8. c |
| 4. c | 9. b |
| 5. a | 10. c |

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer

1. The worst part is having to take the winter clothes off at school.
2. The doors are for putting frozen people in, since they won't bend in the middle.
3. The shoe polish rubs off on the snow, turning it black.
4. It is a movie that By pretends to direct so that he can throw Larry Dunn into a fence.
5. She's upset because her house caught on fire when she was little, and fire scares her.
6. Her hands are sweaty and got the first set wet.
7. She tells Joey that she swore to God, and she can't break her promise.
8. Kenny ate the cookies, so he thinks he will be in trouble, too.
9. By comes back and buries it.
10. Byron doesn't care about the kids he beats up, but he's upset about a bird dying.

Deepen Your Understanding

Answers will vary.

III. CHAPTERS 7–8

Build Your Vocabulary

Wording of definitions may vary. Students may remember the definitions given in the Vocabulary Words to Know section of Focus Your Reading, or

they may refine the definition based on the context of the sentence and the reading overall. Students' new sentences will vary.

Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. c |
| 2. a | 7. a |
| 3. a | 8. c |
| 4. b | 9. b |
| 5. a | 10. a |

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer

1. He pretends Byron is on death row.
2. He says Kenny is teasing him because Byron is the top dog.
3. Dad decides to shave it off.
4. Dad has the other one "scientifically and mathematically" removed so they'd come in on a wing and a prayer.
5. He knows what kids do with other people's toothbrushes, and he doesn't want anyone using his for cleaning things.
6. Momma doesn't seem to be excited about it; she's upset that Dad spent so much money.
7. She makes them stop a little bit at a time, rather than all at once.
8. He cut school, he got in fights, he lit fires, he got "free food," and he straightened his hair.
9. The people are nicer, they have more respect for their parents, and it's warmer.
10. Alabama is too far for Byron to ride the bus alone or for Momma to go with him. Momma and Dad always threaten By with things they'll never do. The kids have heard horrible stories about how strict Grandma Sands is.

Deepen Your Understanding

Answers will vary.

IV. CHAPTERS 9–10

Wording of definitions may vary. Students may remember the definitions given in the Vocabulary Words to Know section of Focus Your Reading, or they may refine the definition based on the context of the sentence and the reading overall. Students' new sentences will vary.

Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. a |
| 2. a | 7. c |
| 3. c | 8. b |
| 4. b | 9. a |
| 5. c | 10. c |

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer

1. Dad hopes Byron will learn to grow up and stop getting into trouble. He hopes Byron will understand the hardships he'll face in life.
2. Kenny's scared that he won't know as much as Momma and Dad and he won't know what to do.
3. Blacks aren't allowed to stop anywhere they want in the South to get a room or food. They can only stop in certain places.
4. He's not going to say anything on the ride down.
5. He thinks it tastes like metal.
6. She thinks it's disgusting to use a bathroom that's inside and it's cleaner to take care of it outside the house.
7. He wants to save money.
8. He thinks it's like wiggling his finger in God's beard and tickling Him.
9. It looks like a beetle on its back with four skinny brown legs.
10. Listening to "Yakety-Yak" and the air

Deepen Your Understanding

Answers will vary.

V. CHAPTERS 11–13

Build Your Vocabulary

Wording of definitions may vary. Students may remember the definitions given in the Vocabulary Words to Know section of Focus Your Reading, or they may refine the definition based on the context of the sentence and the reading overall. Students' new sentences will vary.

Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. a |
| 2. a | 7. c |
| 3. c | 8. b |
| 4. a | 9. c |
| 5. c | 10. c |

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer

1. She's a "teeny-weeny, old, old, old woman" who looks "just like Momma would if someone shrank her down about five sizes and sucked all the juice out of her."
2. Kenny expects By and Grandma to fight, but By only says "Yes, ma'am" when Grandma Sands says they'll get along.
3. He thinks it's a little cooler on the floor.
4. He's lost the desire.
5. Byron says it's a monster that swims in the water and pulls people under. He also says it's the evil twin of Winnie-the-Pooh.
6. He gets scared the third time his head goes under because on television a person's head only goes down three times before drowning.
7. It's gray with square fingers and nothing but darker gray where its face should be.
8. He sees the Wool Pooh, Joetta looking like an angel, and Byron.
9. Byron saves him after the image of Joetta tells Kenny to swim to the surface again.
10. A vision of Joetta points Kenny back to the surface of the lake.

Deepen Your Understanding

Answers will vary.

VI. CHAPTERS 14–15**Build Your Vocabulary**

Wording of definitions may vary. Students may remember the definitions given in the Vocabulary Words to Know section of Focus Your Reading, or they may refine the definition based on the context of the sentence and the reading overall. Students' new sentences will vary.

Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. a | 6. a |
| 2. c | 7. a |
| 3. b | 8. b |
| 4. b | 9. c |
| 5. c | 10. a |

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer

1. Everything stops to wonder what the loud booming noise is.
2. Kenny thinks the Wool Pooh is holding on to the shoe.
3. They would make the colors of the American flag.
4. Kenny thinks Joey is getting to see her family one last time just like he did when he was in the lake.
5. Some white men threw a bomb from a car or planted a bomb in the church.
6. He's hoping the magic powers will make him feel better.
7. Momma and Dad start talking about how proud they are of Kenny when they're sitting on the couch, and they're careful about the other things they discuss.
8. He ran away from the church when he saw the Wool Pooh rather than fighting it like By did in the lake.
9. He says that life isn't always going to be fair and that Kenny has to understand that and go on with life.
10. He sees magic in his father's smile, the way his mother wipes the sleep out of his eyes, the way his sister throws a tea party, and the way his brother made all the big kids play basketball with him.

Deepen Your Understanding

Answers will vary.

END-OF-BOOK TEST

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. b | 11. a |
| 2. c | 12. b |
| 3. a | 13. a |
| 4. c | 14. c |
| 5. a | 15. b |
| 6. a | 16. c |
| 7. c | 17. b |
| 8. b | 18. a |
| 9. a | 19. b |
| 10. c | 20. b |